

**OREGON AND WASHINGTON DEPARTMENTS OF FISH AND WILDLIFE**  
**JOINT STAFF REPORT - SPRING FACT SHEET NO. 9**  
**Joint State Hearing**  
**May 25, 2011**

<b><i>Fisheries under consideration:</i></b>	<b><i>Lower Columbia recreational fisheries</i></b>
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*Stock status and management guidelines for 2011 winter/spring fisheries were presented in Winter Fact Sheet #2 (February 8, 2011).*

- Bonneville Dam counts through May 24 total 160,046 adult upriver spring Chinook.
- TAC has met weekly to review the Columbia River mouth adult upriver spring Chinook return. On Monday (May 23) TAC updated the inseason forecast to 213,400 fish. High river flows have impeded Chinook passage nearly basin-wide, and flows may not subside significantly for the next several weeks.
- Based on the *U.S. v Oregon* agreement the number of harvestable fish allowed for non-Indian fisheries total 19,419 upriver spring Chinook (kept plus release mortalities) and an ESA impact rate of 1.9%.
- Mainstem non-Indian commercial fisheries have landed 4,548 Chinook including 3,466 upriver mortalities. Upriver impacts for combined non-Indian commercial fisheries (mainstem + SAFE) are approaching 100% of the 0.665% ESA impact guideline.
- The recreational fishery downstream of Bonneville Dam re-opened May 15 but extremely high flows and poor fishing conditions negatively affected catch rates. During May 15-22, anglers kept an estimated 1,049 Chinook, including 639 upriver mortalities, from 11,500 angler trips.
- The recreational fishery from Bonneville Dam upstream to the OR/WA border was open for Chinook retention March 16 through May 1, and May 7-10 and the Snake River fishery was open April 20 through May 15. Both areas experienced unusually high catch rates and exceeded their respective upriver spring Chinook allocations.
- Based on management guidelines, an estimated 2,700 upriver spring Chinook remain available for recreational harvest.

<b>Preliminary summary of 2011 Non-Indian upriver Chinook catch (kept + release mortalities)</b>	
Allowed based on in season estimate of 213,400	19,419
Fishery	Kept + release morts
Mainstem commercial (through May 19)	3,466
Select Area commercial (proj. through June 15)	260
Below Bonneville recreational (through May 22)	6,803
Bonn to OR/WA border recreational (complete)	2,403
Upper river recreational (complete)	1,646
Total Upriver Impacts	14,578

- Given the available balance, staff is recommending several modifications for recreational spring Chinook fisheries

<b><i>Recommendation: 2011 Lower Columbia River Spring Chinook Recreational Fishery</i></b>	
The Joint Staff recommends opening the area from the Beacon Rock line upstream to Bonneville Dam to boat angling effective Friday May 27 through Wednesday June 15, 2011.	
<b>Catch limit:</b>	Retention of sockeye, adipose fin-clipped Chinook salmon, and adipose fin-clipped steelhead allowed. Sockeye salmon count towards the adult limit regardless of size.  Daily bag limit includes up to two adult salmon/steelhead in combination, but only one may be a Chinook.
Other Regulations:	All other regulations previously adopted would remain in place.

- If the proposal is adopted, the Columbia River would be open to both bank *and boat* angling from the Rocky Point/Tongue Point line upstream to Bonneville Dam. This area is already open for shad angling.
- Given the current river conditions, estimating catch for the remainder of the season is difficult. Staff estimates recreational catch during May 23-June 15 would be less than 1,600 kept Chinook, including about 1,000 upriver mortalities.
- With the high flows in the river expected to continue and decreasing abundance of Chinook as the run progresses, catch rates will likely wane; therefore, staff considers the catch estimates to be conservative.
- Considering the expected balance of 1,700 upriver spring Chinook remaining on the LCR recreational allocation and that the proposed modifications would result in a full fishery downstream of Bonneville, staff proposes to re-allocate the balance to recreational fisheries upstream of Bonneville Dam. This would provide about 800 fish for each of the two areas (Bonneville Dam to OR/WA border and Snake River).

<b><i>Recommendation: 2011 Bonneville Dam to OR/WA Border Recreational Spring Chinook Fishery</i></b>	
<b>Season</b>	Saturday May 28 through Thursday June 2, 2011 (6 days)
<b>Area:</b>	Tower Island power lines (approximately 6 miles below The Dalles Dam) upstream to Oregon/Washington border plus the Oregon <b>and</b> Washington banks between Bonneville Dam and the Tower Island power lines.
<b>Bag limit:</b>	Retention of sockeye, adipose fin-clipped Chinook salmon, and adipose fin-clipped steelhead allowed. Sockeye salmon count towards the adult limit regardless of size.  Daily bag limit includes up to two adult salmon/steelhead in combination.
<b>Additional regulations:</b>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• For the mainstem Columbia River salmon and steelhead fishery from the Rocky Point/Tongue Point line upstream to OR/WA border, effective through June 15, it is unlawful when fishing from vessels which are less than 30 feet in length (substantiated by Coast Guard documentation or Marine Board registration) to totally remove from the water any salmon or steelhead required to be released.</li> <li>• In Washington, on the mainstem Columbia River anglers may not possess in the field fish mutilated so that size, species or fin clip cannot be determined until the angler has reached their automobile or principle means of land transportation and has completed their daily angling.</li> </ul>	

- Catch (including release mortalities) is not expected to exceed an average of 125 fish each day (750 total).
- Similar to the catch estimate for the LCR fishery, high river flows will likely curb angler success, making the staff estimates conservative.
- If the states adopt both recommendations as proposed, a total of 800 upriver spring Chinook (catch and release mortalities) would be available to allow some of the Snake River sport fisheries to re-open. Washington will announce those seasons pending today's decision.

### **FUTURE HEARINGS**

- Staff will continue to review the spring Chinook stock status and monitor ongoing non-Indian fisheries. Dependant on today's action, spring Chinook passage during the upcoming week, and fishery catch rates, a hearing may be scheduled next week to further review recreational fisheries above Bonneville Dam.